

## **Washington State Historical Society Partners with Tribal Nation and Park Services to Debut Middle Village/Station Camp Park**

*New interpretive park along the Columbia River preserves the cultural history of American Indian trading site*

June 27, 2012 (Tacoma, WA) – The Washington State Historical Society announced today the impending dedication of the Middle Village/Station Camp Park. Located 8 miles east of Ilwaco, Wash. on the Pacific Coast Scenic Byway and within the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Park, the park will be officially dedicated on August 18, 2012. This is the location of one of the oldest and most important American Indian – Euro American trade sites ever uncovered on the Lower Columbia River.

The park is the result of a partnership between the Washington State Historical Society, the Chinook Tribal Nation, the McGowan –Garvin family, the National Park Service, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Featuring an ADA accessible quarter-mile long trail, interpretive signage and elevated overlooks, the park explores the history of this important site from the dawn of Chinookan creation, to European maritime contact, to Lewis and Clark encampment at the conclusion of their mission crossing the continent, and finally the modern settlement as the town of McGowan.

“This project is the culmination of a strong partnership between the past, present, and future stewards of this important site,” said Jennifer Kilmer, Washington State Historical Society Director. “We are excited to have played a role in helping to illuminate a thousand years of history in this place.”

The Chinook Tribal Nation blessed the park on June 12, 2011 before development began by the Washington State Historical Society.

“This park will be a tribute to all that have been here and all the history that has taken place on this site” said Ray Gardner, Chairman of the Chinook Tribe.

Adjacent to the Columbia River and located on the curve of US 101 by St. Mary’s Catholic Church, the park is two miles west of the Astoria-Megler Bridge on US 101 and two miles east of the community of Chinook. Upon dedication, the park will become the newest addition to the National Park System (NPS) and be placed under NPS management.

“This park will tell the story of the Lower Columbia through the words and experiences of the river’s first people” said David Szymanski, Superintendent of Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. “We would like to thank the State of Washington and the Chinook Indian Nation for this incredible gift to the people of the United States.”

#### About Washington State Historical Society

The Washington State Historical Society has been dedicated to collecting, preserving, and vividly presenting Washington's rich and varied history since 1891. The Washington State History Museum, flagship of the Washington State Historical Society, is located at 1911 Pacific Avenue in downtown Tacoma. More information can be accessed by calling 1-888-BE-THERE (1-888-238-4373) or by visiting [www.washingtonhistory.org](http://www.washingtonhistory.org)

#### About the National Park Service

Lewis and Clark National Historical Park celebrates the region where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean, the place where the Lewis and Clark Expedition completed their journey across North America. Through national park sites and partnerships in Washington and Oregon, the park tells the story of contact between the native peoples of the region and the young United States and the 200 years of history that followed these meetings.

#### About the Chinook Nation

The Chinook Indian Nation consists of five tribes that have inhabited the Lower Columbia River since time immemorial. These tribes are the Clatsop, Cathlamet, Wahkiakum, Willapa and the Lower Chinook. The Chinook Indian Nation - as stated in its constitution and bylaws - is organized and dedicated "to enhance the cultural, social and economic well-being of all Chinook Indian Tribal members, to protect the natural resources of the Chinook Indian Tribe's lands and waters and to facilitate the political and legal relationships with external governments." Information at [www.chinooknation.org](http://www.chinooknation.org) or call tribal office at 360-875-6670.